

During a time of great social upheaval, he was sought out by groups from all walks of life and all religions to help bring calm with his nonviolent practices. In his fight for peace, justice, respect and self-determination, he gained the admiration and respect of millions of Americans and most Members of this House of Representatives.

Cesar Chavez will be remembered for his tireless commitment to improve the plight of farm workers, children and the poor throughout the United States and for the inspiration his heroic efforts gave to so many Americans.

We in Congress must make certain that the movement Cesar Chavez began and the timeless lessons of justice and fairness he taught be preserved and honored in our national conscience. To make sure that these fundamental principles are never forgotten, I urge my colleagues to support House Joint Resolution 22 which would declare March 31 as a Federal holiday in honor of Cesar Chavez. In the words of Cesar and the United Farm Workers, *si se puede*, yes, we can.

FISCAL DISCIPLINE AND REDUCING THE DEBT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. HOEFFEL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOEFFEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today because we stand on a threshold of a truly remarkable time, a time when we will be able to do wonderful things for this country and for our children.

In fiscal year 2001, we will have for the first time in decades a surplus in our budget, in the general fund budget. What we do with this surplus will tell a great deal about us, about our resolve, about how serious we are in providing a strong, fiscally sound country for those who come after us.

Some would have us spend this surplus on a multitude of well-intentioned programs and initiatives. But this is a time for restraint, not largesse. Others would have us return the surplus to the American people in the form of broad, across-the-board tax cuts. But for the average taxpayer, that would provide a small short-term gain when we have the ability to provide a much longer term and larger benefit.

That benefit can be provided if we use this projected surplus over the next 15 years to keep the budget balanced and pay down the national debt.

Under the administration's debt reduction program, our debt payments will be reduced from today's level of 14 percent of the national budget to only 2 percent by the year 2015.

The numbers are huge. We owe in public debt \$3.7 trillion. Under the President's debt reduction plan, that would be reduced to \$1.3 trillion by

2015. This would be an immense gift to the American people, and it would benefit all Americans, families, farmers and businesses. It would provide a real long-term benefit to almost every economic level of American society, unlike a broad, across-the-board tax cut as proposed that would mean little more to the average American than \$100 a year in a tax cut.

The biggest effect of paying down our debt would be a further reduction in interest rates that would save homeowners thousands of dollars in mortgage payments. The burden of loans shouldered by our college students would be greatly alleviated. Our farmers would be able to save thousands of dollars on their equipment purchases which in turn would allow them to be more efficient and increase their yields.

With lower interest rates, industry would have more to invest in new technologies and there would be more money to invest in education, in transportation and other infrastructure improvements that would make the America of the 21st century even stronger than the last.

The importance of reducing the debt, however, can be measured in more ways than just dollars and cents. If we show courage and restraint, if we demonstrate that we too can finally live within budgetary guidelines, if we only do in Washington what American families have to do every day at home, we will restore much of the trust that has been lost in government by the American people.

We talk about bipartisanship. Now is the time to begin practicing it. I urge all Democrats and my friends on the Republican side of the aisle as well to do what is prudent, to do what is right, to do something for their children and grandchildren that will be a lasting legacy. Keep the budget balanced and use the surplus to pay down the debt.

FISCAL DISCIPLINE AND REDUCING THE DEBT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. SMITH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge fiscal discipline and fiscal responsibility as we work on the budget for the next fiscal year.

Back in the 1980s when we were running up our yearly deficits and consequently our overall Federal debt, there was a phrase that politicians used to utter in dealing with the problem which was, "The balanced budget has no constituency," which is to say that when you spend money or cut taxes, there is somebody or some group of somebodies who are going to be happy about it. It has a constituency that you can please.

Who benefits from the balanced budget? Who specifically? Well, obviously the entire public, both present and future, of our Nation benefits from it, but in purely political terms, those folks in the 1980s and 1990s had a point. The constituencies were definitely more well defined for all of the programs and tax cuts that were being proposed and passed. I just stand up today to say that fiscal discipline and fiscal responsibility should still be a priority.

Since I have been elected to Congress, a lot of folks have been talking to me about what it means to be a Congressman, how can in essence you prove that you have done a good job. I talk a lot about my emphasis on fiscal responsibility and balancing the budget and there tends to be this look like, "Well, that's just not good enough." As they like to say, you have to have something to bring home, something to put your name on, whether it is a new bridge, a new bus stop in your district, a new swimming pool, you name it, something that you went back there and fought for Federal money to bring home. I understand that. In fact, I will say that many if not most of all of these programs are indeed worthwhile. Spending money on all of those things will help the district, help the State, help the future of the country.

But we also have to remember that we need to be fiscally responsible because, a couple of reasons: First of all, in the future, folks are going to need all of those things as well and if we spend all their money now, they are not going to have them. And second of all, when you run debt up too high, you drag down the economy, drive up interest rates and create job loss, which makes it even more necessary to spend Federal money and it becomes a downward spiral.

What I want people to recognize is that being fiscally responsible and paying down the debt does have a constituency. That is the legacy that I want to leave in my district. I think that is something to bring home, to go back to the people of the Ninth District of the State of Washington or any other district in the country and say, "Yes, maybe I didn't fight for every last Federal dollar but I fought to balance the budget for your benefit, your children's benefit and their children's benefit." I think all politicians on both sides of the aisle should have the courage and stand up for that.

As we head towards this year's budget, there is going to be a major battle. There is incredible pressure to spend money or cut taxes in thousands of different places. The thing about it is, these programs do have some value. As I have often said, I wish just once in my time as a public official somebody would walk into my office and say, "We've got this plan to spend \$5 million on fill-in-the-blank," and I could

honestly look at that person and say, "That's just a complete waste of money. That doesn't do any good for anybody and there's no way we're going to do it."

Of course when you spend money, there is always an argument that it is helping people, and it does. But you have to look at the long term as well. If we spend all the money now, we will be forfeiting and mortgaging our children's future, and that is not fair. At this particular time it is particularly frustrating, because we have a strong economy. We have unemployment of just over 4 percent, we have inflation of below 2 percent. We have a strong economy so that we do not have to spend as much money. The economy is taking care of people. The government does not have to do as much. Now is the time to be fiscally responsible, because if we do not do it now, a few years from now when the business cycle turns on us, it is going to be a thousand times more difficult, because people are going to need those programs and that help or that tax cut even more. Now is the time to be fiscally responsible, balance the budget and give something back to our future.

I think all politicians in this body should be proud to go back to their district and say, "Don't judge me by whether or not I brought you back a highway or a bridge or some other Federal program. Judge me by the fact that I had the foresight and the discipline to balance the budget and take care of our economy for today and tomorrow." That is what I think we should be doing back here in Congress, despite the overwhelming pressure to spend money. Spend it, fine. The Federal Government spends a lot of money, \$1.7 trillion. No reason we cannot spend it within our means. No reason we cannot be fiscally responsible and balance the budget. I urge that we do that as soon as possible and remember that discipline when we go into the budget battles that lie ahead this year.

LEGISLATION TO PREVENT GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWNS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GEKAS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GEKAS. Mr. Speaker, I want the last two speakers to know that I am grateful for their emphasis on fiscal responsibility and to let them know how refreshing it is to hear Members of the other side of the aisle concentrate on reduction of debt, budget responsibility, fiscal responsibility. It gives impetus to my remarks about to be made on something that has been bothering me for 10 years and on which I have spoken at least 100 times on the floor and on which I will ask for their support when the time comes. This mainly is budget restraint through prevent government shutdown legislation.

If there ever was a clamp on our ability to balance the budget and to exude fiscal responsibility, it is the lack of a mechanism to prevent government shutdown. What have I proposed over the last 10 years which now seems to be gathering more momentum?

Everyone should recognize that on September 30, the end of the fiscal year for the Congress of the United States, for the U.S. Government, if no new budget is in place the next day, October 1, we enter into an automatic shutdown of government until a budget can be put into place. What we have resorted to in the past, as a Congress, has been temporary appropriations for 10 days, 2 months, sometimes more than that, but always with another crisis to face us at the end of that deadline on whether or not we will have a full budget.

My proposal is so simple that it cannot penetrate the consciousness of Members of Congress, and that is this: That at the end of the fiscal year, September 30, if no new budget is in place the next day, if no new budget has been passed, then the next day automatically, by instant replay, like in professional football, instant replay, there will be enacted last year's budget.

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What will that do?

That means that forever we will avoid the possibility ever after of shutting down government because there will always be a budget in place. I ask for support of my instant replay legislation which is making the rounds now of the Members of the Congress because it makes common sense.

In the past, I have been saying that the reason my proposal has not passed is because it makes so much sense. Now I want to turn that around and say: Because it makes so much sense, and because it is vital to fiscal responsibility, and because it is vital to the reduction of the debt, and because it is vital to keep the stream of American society moving past any impasse that we might have because of budget breakdowns, I urge that we now see the light of day and pass my instant replay legislation.

No more government shutdowns, no more leaving our troops as we did in Desert Storm ready to fight that battle while the government back in Washington shut down. Can my colleagues imagine anything more disgraceful, more embarrassing, more revolting than that? My legislation would prevent that for all time.

Mr. Speaker, I urge full and constant and instant support of my instant replay legislation.

MEXICO IS NOT AGGRESSIVE IN DRUG ENFORCEMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gen-

tleman from Indiana (Mr. SOUDER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SOUDER. First, Mr. Speaker, I would like to say "amen" to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GEKAS) and would like to remind people who sometimes do not remember historical points and therefore are prone to repeat them is, as one of the so-called firebrands of the Class of 1994, I supported Mr. GEKAS and other similar legislation from the beginning, as we did before the government shutdown.

The fact is that it was not the House that shut down the government, it will not be the House that shuts down the government, and it should not be, which is why we need to pass this legislation. We have been for this all the way along.

Others would like to make it look like unless they get their way in the appropriation bills that we are the bad guys, but that is different from the truth, and it is put up or shut up time. The gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GEKAS) has had this bill for year after year. Where are the cosponsors who like to whine about the threat of a government shutdown? Why are they not backing his bill?

But I came down here today to talk about the drug issue. In the last few days, the President has certified Mexico as a cooperating partner in the war against drugs, and I would like to comment particularly on that subject. Although in the Committee on Education and the Workforce we are continuing to work with the Drug-free Schools Act, Safe and Drug-free Schools Act, we are continuing to work with treatment programs and many other areas, right now the focus is and should be on interdiction, because there is only so much schools can do in Indiana and around the country if they are flooded with this huge supply of high-grade cocaine, heroin, marijuana that has been coming in mostly through the Mexican border and increasingly through the Mexican border and is produced predominantly in three countries in the world: Peru, Bolivia and Columbia.

Mr. Speaker, we need to understand that we, while we can argue whether this is a cancer or a war, it is, in fact, both because there is a war going on in South America. Two countries have made tremendous progress: Peru and Bolivia. It shows that we can actually reduce the coca bean grown, reduce the cocaine being processed and reduce the cocaine being shipped.

In Columbia, there is a battle on the ground; and, in Mexico, it is a little bit bigger question because it is clear that some of the people, or most, as far as we can tell, of the people in their government are attempting to cooperate with us. It is not clear that we have had such cooperation in the past, and many of the proposals are relatively new on the table.

The gentleman from Florida (Mr. MICA) of the Subcommittee on Drug